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The Gravest Peril of All.

Under any other circumstances we should defer the remarks we are about to make until a period of calmer public judgment and more deliberate public reflection. We are as mindful as any can be of the delicacies and the decorum that should mark journalistic expression in this critical hour, fraught not only with the excitement naturally incident to such a tragedy as is being enacted, but also with the gravest possibilities and the most tremendous contingencies touching the Government itself.

The situation is one that calls for the utmost self-possession, the coolest caution and the most conservative patriotism on the part of every person having the least access to the public understanding or the most trivial facilities for impressing the popular mind. Hence, as a rule, all political discussion should be suspended, all party feeling put aside and every utterance calculated to heighten the fever already burning in the national veins carefully avoided.

Our duty chosen and inaugurated President lies at death's door and his constitutional successor awaits, in sorrow that can be measured only by the magnitude of his responsibility, the turn of the wheel of fate. Thus far the emotions of our vast populace have been kept within bounds, and unless through some devilish machination of desperadoes, or some malign device of revolutionary villains the train of sedition should be ignited, there is every reason to hope that the sturdy common sense and grand conservatism of the American mind, in its better and nobler phases, will carry us safely through the crisis.

But in this moment of agony; nay, under the very shadow of the awful possibility that overhangs the White House, what do we see? In the midst of sorrowing friends, agonized relatives and the awe-stricken heads of the Government itself, peer and flit the sinister faces and echo the baleful whispers of a small group of reptiles in human shape crawling erect on end, whom it would affront humanity to call men, vomiting into the witches cauldron of this crisis their poison slime of covert insinuation and their deadly venom of vague hint against the fair fame of those whom destiny may soon call upon the Republic to honor, and whom hard fate may soon command all good citizens to obey.

We will not mention the names of these miscreants. We need not describe them. The ingenuity of rhetoric stands at fault for an epithet fit for the one and helplessly in want of terms fit for the other. Suffice to say that in the malignant virus of their whispered conclave lurks the deadly poison of sedition and in the desperate promptings of their vile souls is disguised the horrible spirit of anarchy and revolution.

Through confederates in the press this nest of human serpents is busily infiltrating the popular blood with the poison of doubt and corrupting the public imagination with the disease of suspicion. 'Tis, to our mind, is the Gravest Peril of All. If, in their present state of suspense and sorrow, any considerable part of the American people should be seized with the conviction that Guiteau was the agent of a plot, or that his maniac hand was directed to its awful work by the instigation, or even inspiration of men ambitious to reap the results of his crime, our institutions would not be worth a moment's purchase. There would be a revolution such as the world has never seen and a Reign of Terror compared to which the French Revolution was child's play.

And yet in the face of all these horrible possibilities the serpents keep crawling in and out of the White House, holding whispered consultations with high officers of the Government and darting all over the land upon the telegraph wires as with forked tongues their baleful slanders. These things are the sowing of the wind of anarchy from which our devoted millions may come to reap the whirlwind of revolution.

We believe we echo the sentiments of every good citizen when we say that these things must stop. If the high officer who has the power and the responsibility in these premises has in him a spark of patriotism not quenched by love of sensation and craving for notoriety, he will stop it instantly. Let the reptiles of whom we speak be scourged to their holes at least until a more decent season, if this Republic has come to be, as many fear, a government of detectives, for God's sake wait until the

Nation gets done holding its breath before the devilish machinery of intrigue is set in motion. Fifty millions of people in mourning for a dying President, whom all revere and nearly all love, should be permitted to hear from the death-bed other news than that of a group of unscrupulous conspirators are trying to whisper out among themselves some pitiful job against the peace of the country, the order of society, and the very execution of the law itself!

It is time that this matter received the attention of the Cabinet. There is no telling how soon its consequences may begin if the thing be permitted to go on, and still less telling where they will end if once begun. The country is in a ferment. The popular mind is in a terribly inflammable state and the fever is rising with every report of symptom from the august sufferer's bedside. How little it might take to produce an explosion God only knows. It is the instant duty of common patriotism to stay the incendiary hands that are trying to kindle the fatal spark of ignition. In God's name let it be done.

Warned by the awful experience of France, let us stop the progress of our Dantons and our Robespierres while it is yet time and before they may be borne into irresistible power on the top billow of a public craze of their own making.

IN THAT SILENT and anxious crowd upon which the crescent moon looked down on Saturday night through the over-arching branches in front of the White House, were countenances held to calm expectancy and resolute endurance. The base of the iron fencing that stretches around the grounds was taken as a seat, and upon it rested an unbroken line of silent figures—men and women, black and white—all awaiting through the lingering hours for the fragmentary tidings communicated in whispers swift and low, that went quivering like a pulse through the dense mass ranging outside, all hushed into a solemn silence by that sympathy that made the life of one man the sole thought of a Nation.

TWO OF THE LATEST official acts of Mr. Garfield possess a certain historic value—the appointment of Hannibal Hamlin as Minister to Spain, and Henry Highland Garnett as Minister to Liberia. The latter is singularly appropriate. Mr. Garnett has long stood among the foremost champions of his race in this country, and is a man of high character and fine attainments. Mr. Hamlin belongs to our national history, and his life is interlocked in a long chain of great events, but the question will rise whether Spain will not be a very warm place for the sturdy old man who could never find a day to wear an overcoat during a Washington winter.

DEATH AFTER DEATH has so desolated the home of the poet Saxe, that he had determined to leave it and find a shelter for his loneliness and comfort for his grief in the house of his son. The necessary arrangements were being pushed to completion, when upon last Thursday morning that son, his father's namesake, was found in his bed dead from hemorrhage of the lungs. The genial-hearted poet, whose gay humor has furnished our current literature with such a fund of merry jests, seems doomed to suffer in his old age a sad series of domestic losses.

AN APOLOGY would, perhaps, be in place if it were hinted that it is a little Irish for Mr. Parnell to so publicly announce that he is coming over to America expressly to stop the very tongues that he so zealously set wagging. He marched through our land like a prophet of old, urging all patriotic Irish-Americans to cry aloud and spare not, and especially not to spare their purses. They have done it—indeed, the ever faithful O'Donovan Rossa and his clan have gone and done it, and now Mr. Parnell is still unsatisfied.

WOMAN'S WORK is always a sphere. There does not seem to be any special reason for it to assume this shape, but that is what it is invariably called. This sphere was formerly used for its compressive power, but recently it has taken to swelling on every side just as a sphere is bound to do. In this process of enlargement it is embracing many novel employments, and among these a most unexpected development is into dentistry. This is an avocation apparently most unattractive and unsuited to women. Yet perhaps an exceptional case, fitted to prove the rule, Mrs. Fuglestad, a graduate of the dental department of the University of Michigan, is practicing the profession very successfully in Hamburg, Germany.

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NOTICE.—All owners or keepers of dogs in the District of Columbia are notified that the yearly tax, imposed by act of Congress on all dogs owned or kept in said District, will be due and payable on July 1, 1881. Upon payment of said tax, tags will be issued as provided in said act. By order of the Commissioners D. J. COOK.

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